

RESISTING SATAN

James wrote, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you” (James 4.7-8).¹ The devil, cunning as he may be, never has been able to ensnare those who are willing to put up a fight. Joseph resisted the advance of Satan through Potiphar’s wife by fleeing from her and her immoral intentions and left his outer garment in her hands (Genesis, chapter 39). Job resisted the advance of Satan through his wife who, seeing her husband painfully afflicted with sores, said to him, “Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die” (Job 2.9). Job, who had suffered near total disaster with the loss of his children, his possessions, and his health, replied, “You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?” (Job 2.10). Jesus forcefully resisted the advance of Satan in the Judean wilderness by using the word of God (Matthew, chapter 4). Three times our Lord withstood the devil by replying, “it is written” (Matthew 4.4, 6, 10). True to the words of James, when Jesus resisted, the devil fled (Matthew 4.11). We too can find “the way out” (1 Corinthians 10.13) and send the devil back to his dungeon, but we must be willing.

First, we must be willing to “not give the devil a foothold” (Ephesians 4.27).² We must be willing to avoid places that Satan controls. Nightclubs, dancing halls, taverns, places of gambling, and so forth are places where the devil is the strongest. It would be difficult to resist him in such circumstances. Second, we must be willing to “put on the whole armor of God . . . to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6.11). We must be willing to study God’s

¹Scripture quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version* (1989).

²From the *New International Version* (2011).

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word and learn what our Maker desires of us. Then we must be willing to fill our lives with the goodness of his will. By prayer, the study of the word, and helping those who are in need, we build a spiritual fortress that even Satan cannot destroy. God gives us this power through his saving grace in Christ and the intercessory work of the Holy Spirit. This enables us to resist the devil. The question is: are we willing?